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The
Church of England
IN HARMONY WITH
Holy Scripture.

JOSIAH BATEMAN, M. A.



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The Church of England

IN HARMONY WITH

Holy Scripture.

BY

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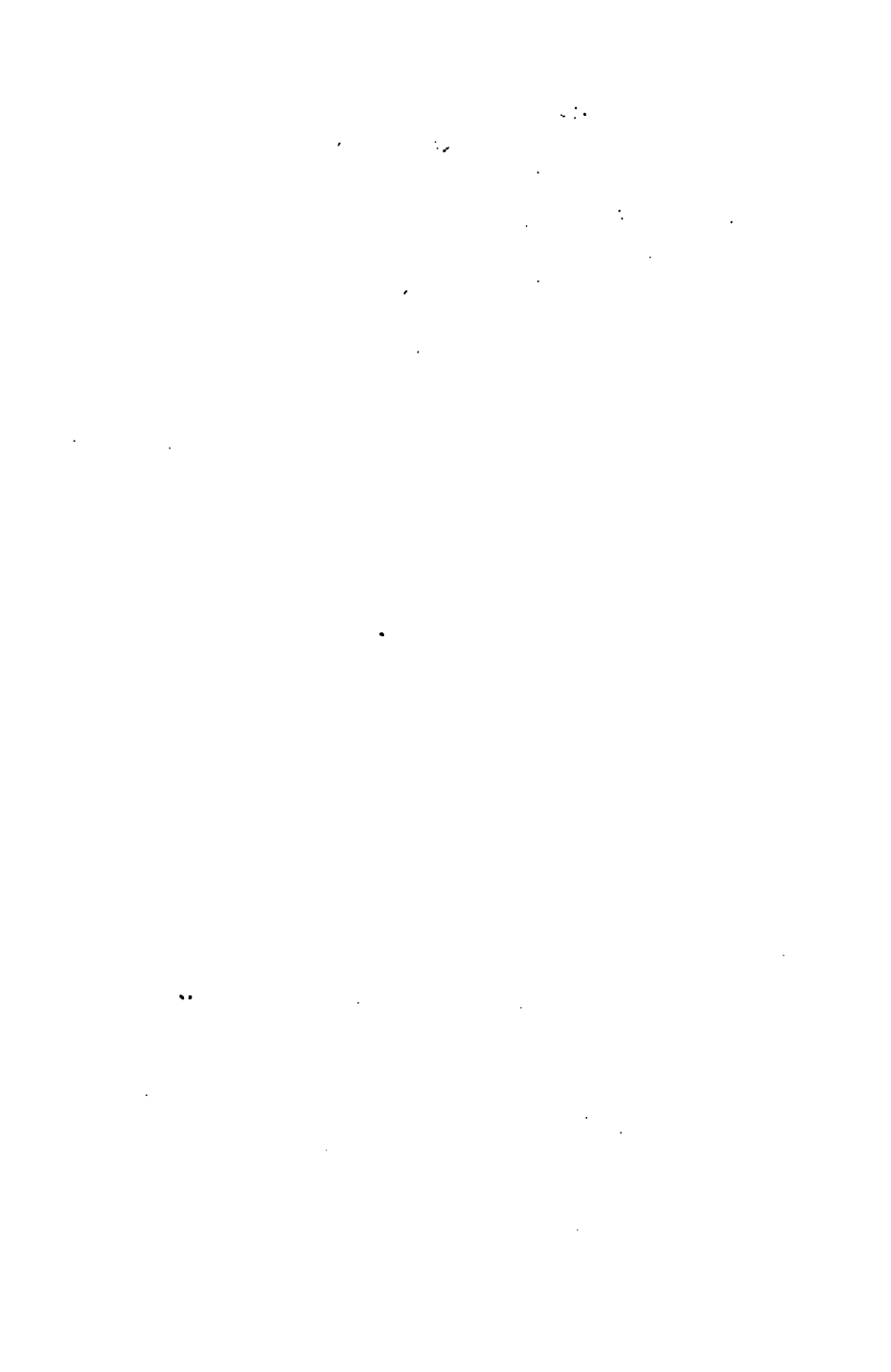
TO

His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury,

WITH REVERENCE,

TRUST, GRATITUDE, AND

AFFECTION.



PREFACE.

THIS little work is the same in substance with an inaugural address delivered this year before the members of the young and vigorous Church Institute at Margate, of which the Archbishop of Canterbury has condescended to become Patron, and of which I have the honor to be President. The publication, though requested at the time, has been deferred from pressure of engagements.

Though points of controversy are touched here and there, yet the primary object of the work is not controversial. It is designed as a kind of Manual for the young. There are many members of the Church who, on leaving the domestic circle and the middle class school, enter our larger parishes, and take their places in our counting-houses, ware-



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houses, and shops. They are intelligent, and have high aspirations; but their principles are not fixed, and they have no leisure for large books, nor inclination for deep study. They catch at once the intellectual activity of the day; they have their evening hours at command; and associations of all kinds invite their co-operation. Young Men's Christian Associations, however useful in their way, undermine Church principles and suggest Dissent. Nonconformists invite their adherence by denouncing the Church as unscriptural and secular, and by quoting, or rather misquoting, the text, "My kingdom is not of this world." The children of Irving, playing at Churchmanship, invite them to join the game. The Plymouth Brethren, "compassing sea and land to make one proselyte," set spiritual traps for their inexperienced feet. Unbelievers and pleasure-seekers tempt them to turn the hallowed and gracious rest of the seventh day into an occasion of sin and excitement. Amidst all this confusion young persons get bewildered; and for many of these

questions, irreligious and religious, they know no answer. Now I would have them know. I would have them able to "give to every one that asketh a reason of the hope" that is in them. I would have them know "the certainty of those things" wherein they have been instructed. They will find in this treatise enough, generally speaking, to silence their opponents, and sufficient to quiet their own minds. This is the end proposed, and no more. It is the motive which induced me to publish to others, what I have already said to my own people.

All parties are troubled in these days. Rationalism and Ritualism trouble the Church. Presbyterians are contending for a Liturgy. "We chant the *Te Deum* better in our chapel than you do in the parish church," was the saying of a Wesleyan to his Vicar the other day. "What does it matter!" was the cool response of an Independent Deacon of high repute, to an expression of regret that so many Dissenting Ministers denied the doctrine of eternal punish-

ments, defended Colenso, and advocated "Ecce Homo."

Change has alike come over all. All tacklings are loosened. All vessels are drifting. I am not myself an alarmist, because I believe the Church of England carries plenty of ballast. But I feel the importance of preventive measures by those who are in authority: and in my humble sea-side quarters I would launch a boat, carrying out anchors which, by God's gracious favour, may enable some little ships to outride the storm, to avoid the rocks, and to escape making "shipwreck of faith and a good conscience."

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Is the Church of man's device or God's? It is called the Church of the Living God: of that God who is said to have Life in himself, and who giveth to all "life and breath and all things." But does God thus live? Is he thus the source of life? Are we indeed "his offspring?"

These questions make a preliminary chapter necessary, when we would compare our Bible and our Church, and attempt to shew that, like all God's works, they are in harmony. Lest haply when the warp and woof are intertwined, and the fabric seems complete, some rude bystander should attempt to unravel all, by saying that it is mere cunning craftiness, whereby men lie in wait to de-

ceive ; that God takes cognizance of no such matters, and that neither CREATION, PROVIDENCE, nor GRACE, are his handy work.

Hence some short and condensed proof seems necessary in confirmation of three primary truths:— that God made the worlds ; that he upholdeth all things by the word of his power ; and that he is the rewarder of all that diligently seek him :—or, in other words, that he is the God of Creation, the God of Providence, and the God of Grace.

1. THE GOD OF CREATION. Men doubt this in our days. They doubt the necessity of any active Divine interference in bringing about the existing order of things. They talk of development, and thrust back difficulties into the “clouds and darkness” of the past. Millions of years ago the elephant, who now shakes the earth with his tread ; the lion, who now awakens its echoes with his roar ; and man, who holds dominion over all, were gradually developed from some shapeless mass, or some fortuitous concourse of atoms. An instinctive desire to walk, pushed out feet ; an irresistible wish to see, inserted eyes ; a necessity to hear, affixed ears ; a longing to grasp, formed hands !

These absurdities, and many of a like kind, supposed and received by those who prefer development to creation:—far greater difficulties appear. For matter may doubtless be twisted into any conceivable form, and by various combinations might become flesh, and that flesh might be compacted with joints and covered with skin ; but whence came LIFE—and with life, Thought, Reason, Mind, and Soul ?

These questions stop everything. No combination of matter can of itself, and left to itself, live, and think, and reason, and aspire, and adore ! And the poorest and most illiterate peasant in the land, finds more true philosophy in one verse of the Bible, than is to be found in all the dark guesses of our modern theorists, when he reads that after God had formed man, he “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” You have here cause and effect, a power corresponding with the result produced, a creature formed by a Creator.

2. THE GOD OF PROVIDENCE. Man talks of the laws of nature ; that they are fixed and immutable ; that things having once received their impulse, admit of no interference ; that all is like a

machine wound up, fitted to run its round, accomplish its object, and then come to an end. Why bend the knee in prayer, he asks, when all things are ordered and cannot be displaced; when war will infallibly fulfil its mission; when pestilence will track its victims; when air will rush to fill up every vacuum; when sun and moon will keep their appointed seasons; when life and death will necessarily obey the laws assigned to them?

Such reasoners forget, that amidst all these fixed things, one thing is free—the WILL OF GOD. That is bound by no laws, confined by no rules, fettered by no chains, limited by no barriers. The WILL OF GOD is supreme. All laws, all rules, all chains, all barriers bend or break before it. Sun, moon, stars, winds, waves, blight, pestilence, famine, sword, sickness, health, life, death may be bound, but the will of God roves amongst them free, controls their powers, directs their movements, commands their services, calls and they come, speaks and they obey. That free action is PROVIDENCE. In ways inconceivable to us, all things are subservient to it: and mind rules matter. Even we ourselves, frail as we are, have yet our freedom. I would raise my arm, it rises; I would fix my eye, it fixes. The

will commands, matter obeys. And thus the idea of a superintending and commanding Will, that is, PROVIDENCE, is brought home to us. It is quite true that we are surrounded by natural powers and phenomena acting uniformly. Fire burns, water drowns, iron sinks, the sun rises, food nourishes, medicine heals: all these act uniformly, and by what may be called fixed laws; and yet so far as our volition is concerned, we move amongst them free. We use or refuse the medicine; we vary our food; we avoid or approach the fire; we tempt or shrink from the waters; we fix our axe to the helve; we portion out our fields; we seek sympathy in sorrow; we choose friends; we ask help; we obtain deliverance. All is not blind fatalism and stern unbending necessity! Shame to the man, philosopher though he may be called, who asserts it! We cannot violate with impunity, or change the laws which regulate all things with which we are surrounded, and yet we may move amongst them and use them freely.

And may it not be the same—and in an infinitely higher sense—with God? May not HIS WILL stay the sun from going down (as we speak) for a day without altering permanently the laws of motion?

May he not make iron swim without altering permanently the laws of gravity? May he not multiply the provision of bread without altering the laws of production and reproduction? May he not remove disease without altering the general laws of healing? And if so, then we have found the God OF PROVIDENCE—the God who sent and stayed the pestilence at Jerusalem—the God who bade the sun stand still at the word of Joshua—the God who fed five thousand with a few barley loaves and fishes—the God who walked upon the sea as upon liquid glass—the God whom all things both in heaven and earth obey.

3. THE GOD OF GRACE. This follows almost as a corollary from what has gone before. For who can conceive of a watchful superintendence which numbers the hairs of our head, and takes cognizance of the fall of a sparrow, and yet makes no provision for the salvation of the soul! If God cares for the body, how much more for the soul! If he is the God of Providence, how much more the God of Grace! Salvation is of Grace: and it leads to the bringing of many sons to glory. It is summed up in the Holy Scriptures, where God

has spoken, or not at all. His will is to be found there, or nowhere.

THE OLD TESTAMENT bears its own credentials. Book calleth to book. All is instinct with life. I have seen, on the banks of the Ganges, where vegetation has a vigour and a wantonness unknown in temperate climes, a single grain of pollen dust blown upon the object glass of a powerful microscope, and so magnified as to display, not only the many coloured atoms of which that single grain was composed, but the internal life it manifested. Each atom appeared and disappeared by turns, intertwining with its fellows, involving and evolving, folding and doubling, diverse and yet the same, endued with life and ready to perpetuate it.

Thus it is with the Old Testament. Its various books bear testimony to one another. They bespeak the same origin. They lead to the same result. Each individual writer, as he appears or disappears, points to some one who has gone before, or prophecies of some one who is yet to come. Successive ages are linked together; hand joins in hand; and all stand or fall together. The biography, the history, the prophecy, the devotion, are all true or all false. If Elijah never lived, what sense is there in

the prophecy of Malachi? How can it reach backward to the great reformer of Israel, and forward to the great forerunner of our Lord? If "Noah, Daniel, and Job," were myths, then Ezekiel's praise is fabulous: but if they really lived and served their generation by the will of God, then his words carry conviction over seventeen hundred years, and touch matters of infinite importance. If Isaiah saw with his own eyes the hosts of Sennacherib struck down without the walls of Jerusalem, then the books of Kings and Chronicles in which the event is recorded, are true and trustworthy. David commemorates in sacred verse the varied history of the Jews as recorded in the Pentateuch. If Moses is false, David cannot be true. Josiah finds the long neglected Book of the Law, and bows before it as the Word of God, and all his people with him. The whole nation is deceived, or else that Book of the Law is genuine and authentic. Jonah tells of the impulsive, but temporary repentance of the Ninevites; and Nahum confirms his word by recording their final and subsequent destruction. If Ezra and Nehemiah really rebuilt the temple, then Haggai and Zechariah really prophesied. The sermon delivered on that occasion within

the rising walls endorses all the miracles of Egypt, and enumerates the provocations of the people and the forbearance of God. If the text is false, the sermon cannot be true. All hangs together. If Moses is false in prose, David is false in poetry. If Jeremiah never wrote, Daniel's prayer is an absurdity. You have either a succession of holy, trustworthy, divinely chosen, and divinely taught men, each delivering, it is true, his own independent testimony, but making himself responsible also for what had been "written aforetime;" or you have the blind leading the blind, and all falling into the ditch! And how can this blindness be supposed, when their mighty words are mingled with mighty works? The question is not simply that historians, and seers, and psalmists, and prophets believed in one another; but that God wrought with them and confirmed their words with signs following. It is not that you have Moses standing alone, and demanding credence to the word he speaks; but you have Joshua also, who bade the sun stand still; David, who was the man after God's own heart; Elijah, who was taken to heaven in a whirlwind; Isaiah, who saw Christ's day; Daniel, who was delivered from the lion's den:—all uniting in their

testimony to his truth, making his writings the text of their sermons, the burden of their prayers, the key-note of their songs, and the guide of their lives!

Above all, you have the testimony of ONE before whom every knee must bow. Our blessed Lord had the "volume of the book" in his hands, and each part passed before his eyes. His approbation affixes the seal to the Divine authority of it as a whole; and there is scarcely a sacred writer whom he does not quote. Now, to quote from a book as authoritative, is to approve and sanction it.

On one occasion He is being questioned on the subject of divorce. "He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female?" There is the book of Genesis.

He is preaching on the Mount, and says, "Ye have heard that it has been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill." There is the book of Exodus.

He heals a leper, and says to him, "See thou tell no man, but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded." There is the book of Leviticus.

He is in the desert, and repels one temptation of the devil by saying, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." There is the book of Deuteronomy.

He is defending his disciples, and says to their accusers, "Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him?" There are the books of Numbers and Samuel.

He refers to the Queen of the South, and says that "she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon." Here are the books of Kings and Chronicles, whilst a niche is found for the "Song" of Solomon, the "Proverbs," and other results of his inspired "wisdom."

Our Lord is questioning the Pharisees concerning their expected Messiah, and he says, "How then doth David in spirit, call him Lord?" Here is the book of Psalms.

He is eating with publicans and sinners, and says to those who cavilled at it, "Go ye, and learn what that meaneth, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice.'" Here is the prophet Hosea.

He is foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, and refers to the "abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel standing in the holy place." Here is the book of Daniel.

The Scribes and Pharisees come asking of him a sign, and he says, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Here is the book of Jonah.

He comes riding into Jerusalem upon "an ass and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." Here is the fulfilment of words spoken by the prophet Zechariah.

He is preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth, and takes for his text a verse of the prophet Isaiah. He is driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and refers as an authority to the prophet Jeremiah. But enough. Further quotations would be wearisome, and these suffice to prove that there is scarcely a sacred book included within the canon of the Old Testament which has not been in the hands and received the Divine approval of the LORD OF ALL.

And now as to the New Testament. We have been looking at a chain—now we are to look at a

group of witnesses. There was no possibility of collusion before ; but there is now. Twelve men come forward to explain Christ's doctrine, to rear his cross, to spread his gospel, and to bring all men to the obedience of the faith. "Ye are my witnesses," he says to them :—and we must examine their characters and testimony. If we do this with impartiality and accuracy, the following points will stand out prominently and clearly. They were men of varied character and attainments, but perfectly capable of forming a correct judgment on matters of fact. They recorded events which they themselves had "seen," and "heard," and "handled." Their narratives differ in detail, but they depict the same perfect character, and teach the same pure morality. Their own lives were unspotted. They were swayed by no interested motives. They never faltered in their testimony. They willingly endured the loss of all things. They lived a holy life, and died, for the most part, a martyr's death. And all this while they were changing the features and the religion of the world, encountering the bigoted Jew, the masterful Roman, the witty Athenian, the luxurious Corinthian, the fickle Galatian, the licentious Ephesian—taking out of them "a people

for his name," and "adding to the Church of such "as should be saved;" God meanwhile bearing them witness by the wondrous miracles wrought by their Master and themselves—miracles openly performed, easily to be understood, instantaneously accomplished, independent of second causes, full of a great purpose, and stamped with permanency:—a governor endorsing the change of water into wine; twelve basketsful of fragments collected before all men; maniacs sitting clothed and in their right minds; lepers shewing themselves to the priest; a Lazarus alive and sitting at the table; holy sacraments commemorative of a mission really accomplished, of disciples gathered of a body really broken, and blood really shed. Such testimony, borne by such men, fearlessly and publicly, at the very time the events occurred, and amongst the very people with whom they and their Master had sojourned, is surely to be believed! Committed to writing, and conveyed to us by successive generations of pure-handed and true-hearted believers, it constitutes what we now call the New Testament—the sacred deposit of the Gospel. It tells of the incarnation of the only be-gotten Son of God; of the fulfilment of the prophecies which went before

concerning him; of his wondrous miracles, his gracious words, his spotless character; of his precious blood-shedding upon the cross, his opening of the fountain for sin and for uncleanness; of justification by faith; of sanctification by the Spirit; of the membership in one mystical body; of the grafting by Holy Baptism into the Church, and of the Christian passing the waves of this troublesome world, so that finally he may come to the land of everlasting life. All this is of God; and it shews him indeed to be the GOD OF GRACE!

Now, then, we want a casket for this jewel; a scaffolding for this building; an ark for this elect people of God! The following chapter will shew what God has done to supply this want.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH CONNECTED WITH THE STATE.

I AM not about to shew that the doctrines of the Bible and the articles of the Church are in harmony. There is little or no doubt upon that point. It is to the framework of the Church that I would direct attention; and that both in itself, and in its relation to the State. I take both to be scriptural; and if scriptural, then in accordance with the will of God. It is well that every member of the Church should feel that he is right; but it is not well that he should go about to prove that everybody else is wrong. A mind informed, is a mind calm; and the consciousness of strength is the best possible preservative of peace.

No one, I think, can study attentively the Old Testament, without perceiving how closely secular and religious institutions are there interwoven with each other. It is like net-work: you cannot separate without unravelling it. The priesthood is

amenable to the king as supreme, and in all things lawful they do his bidding. By his command they enquire of the Lord; at his call they assemble in the temple. They proclaim a fast when he and his people would humble themselves before God. They collect the offerings of the faithful when he would repair the breaches of the sanctuary. They observe festivals and commemorations when the decree is issued. They are summoned to answer for misdeeds laid to their charge, and are dismissed from the exercise of their sacred functions if condemned. The order of their "courses," and the time of their attendances on public service are matters enjoined on them and obeyed.

Thus the Jewish kings and governors acted up to the letter, as well as in the spirit, of the words spoken by Samuel to Saul—that the Lord had made him Head of all the tribes of Israel, of which Levi, of course, was one.

But then, on the other hand, we see the priests admitting of no kingly interference in the exercise of their own peculiar functions. It is they alone who receive and present the burnt sacrifices and free-will offerings of the people. It is the representative of their order alone who enters into the

Holy of Holies. To them it appertaineth to consecrate the king, and place the crown upon his head. And when with hasty or unhallowed hands he would intrude into their office, or burn incense upon their altar, as in the case of King Saul, or King Uzziah, immediate punishment follows: the one is rejected from being king, the other is driven out of the temple, and remains a leper to the day of his death—God thus sanctioning the rightful claims of his Church.

All this mingling together of things human and divine, brought about a unity of operations which could have been attained in no other way. Without it there could have been no national recognition of religion, no national humiliation under God's chastisements, no national acknowledgment of God's deliverances; and all the statutes and ordinances framed to make Israel shine like a light in a dark world would have been of none effect.

In truth, whereas we in the present day are disposed to individualize too much, and to lose sight of our national in our personal religious obligations, it is impossible to read the history of God's chosen people without being struck with a marked contrast in this respect, and observing

that the individual is well nigh merged in the community ; and that national obligations take precedence, to say the least, of all personal ones.

Now if there never had been any disputes about Church government, and if it was left to us to frame a scheme most likely to conduce to general edification, and we had no other light to guide us than that reflected from the pages of the Old Testament, true wisdom would, I think, be shewn in following as closely as possible, and as far as possible, that ancient precedent which had received the stamp of God's approval. We might argue, and that most fairly, that if it pleased God aforetime to regard his people as a collective body, and to deal with them as such ; if he thought fit to prosper or to punish them as a nation ; if he appointed kings to be the nursing fathers, and queens the nursing mothers, to his church ; if he gave supreme authority to the king in secular matters, and sacerdotal authority to the priest in spiritual matters ; and if he so mingled together these two that they should be neither dependent on, nor independent of, each other ;—we may fairly argue, I say, that if all this was well-pleasing to

God in former days, it cannot *in itself* be displeasing to him in these latter days ; and that any one, in the absence of better light or other directions, would be wise in framing his own scheme of Church government after this inspired model. The dispensation, the ministry, the services, the doctrines, might all be changed ;—but call the Jewish king a Christian queen, and the Jewish priesthood a Christian ministry ; and the connection between the Church and State might still be both lawful and desirable.

The argument says nothing in favour of fitting incongruous materials together, of putting a piece of new cloth to an old garment, of adopting sacrificial vestments when propitiatory sacrifices are abolished, of revivifying Judaism when it is dead. All know that the Jewish ordinances were but a shadow of good things to come, and that they have passed away. All follow the Apostle St. Paul in saying that as a rule of life, the Law is abrogated. Upon all these points, as well as upon all matters of doctrine, the argument does not touch. But if, when Christianity assumed a definite form, and the Supreme power recognised its claims, some scheme was to be framed which should give to it a distinctive cha-

racter, and enable it to act in that character in the sight of God and man ; then, I say, that the argument from analogy would persuade us to follow out, as nearly as might be, the model framed by men whom God himself inspired in former days ; unless—

1. There was anything in the scheme itself which rendered it impracticable under present circumstances ; unless—

2. The further adoption of it had been discountenanced or expressly forbidden by God ; unless—

3. Some other scheme had been laid down and enjoined upon us.

Now, as touching these three exceptional points, it is certain that no other rule or scheme has been laid down for the Christian Church as regards its connection with the State :—that the adoption or adaptation of the Jewish model, in this respect, has never been discountenanced or forbidden by God :—and that there are no circumstances in the present or past condition of our native country which renders the scheme itself impracticable.

The conclusion follows. As when Christianity

superseded Judaism, no express directions were vouchsafed as to the admission of the *infants* of believers to the blessings of the baptismal covenant, or as to the continuance of one day of rest out of seven, because God's will had been sufficiently made known before in the appointment of the initiatory rite of circumcision on the eighth day, and of the seventh day's rest or Sabbath; so in the present case also, Wisdom is justified of her children, and says that they do well to build their spiritual temple upon the old foundations laid in Zion, and to frame it according to the pattern shewn them in the Mount.

Princes should be supreme, and the Church obedient in all things lawful. The truth of the everlasting Gospel, ministered faithfully by the one, and protected affectionately by the other, should be regarded by both as a sacred and unalterable deposit; whilst the nation at large should bear a distinctive religious character, and in that character be able to approach God alike in humiliation, supplication, or thanksgiving. All this cannot be, if the Church is deemed paramount and infallible, and is allowed to set her foot upon the necks of kings; neither can it be, if individuals are to form separate

communities in matters of religion, and hold themselves as such, independent of all external influence and authority. The result in either case would be the same. The State would be ignored. It would not be allowed to speak on the first supposition, and it would not be obeyed if it did speak on the other. You can have no national recognition of religion, unless you have a Church interwoven with the State.

Nor will it be safe for an adversary to argue against this connection from any supposed secularity it may entail upon the Church, or any supposed abuses to which it may be liable. All things are liable to abuse. All religious institutions are in danger of secularity. No immunity is claimed for our Church. We assert no perfection ; even whilst believing that most of her imperfections are grossly exaggerated.

And let the adversary beware how he uses this weapon against us ! It has a double edge, and cuts both ways. He may get a back stroke himself. Is there no secularity amongst those who dissent from our Church, and declaim loudly against its establishment ? Do they fall into no political organization, and strive for no political influence ?

Do none band together for offensive warfare? Do none raise the war cry: "Down with her, down with her, even to the ground"? Are there no Unions formed for influencing the great council of the nation? Is no money put into the bag? Are no by-ends proposed, no by-ways trodden? Are there no wheels within wheels, full of eyes, and moved by the spirit of the world? May there not arise, even within a select and self-constituted circle, heart-burnings, divisions, strivings for pre-eminence, heresies, and many an evil work? Tibni may die, and Omni reign: but will he reign better? Do the glimpses of past history, in the time of Charles and Cromwell, shew more moderation, tolerance, freedom of thought and opinion, greater soundness of doctrine, and less viciousness of life—whilst others, bearing other names and upholding other schemes, held sway in religious matters—than is now and has been long enjoyed under our Episcopal form of Church government? "I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say." I bring no sort of accusation, and make no sort of charge: neither am I writing in unkindness, or to stir up controversial strife. The sole object proposed will be attained, if it is perceived how the arguments of an adversary

against the union of Church and State, *when based upon its abuses only*, may be turned and used against him.

I am, however, the less careful to enter into a full discussion of these supposed abuses, because the real essence of the Church is by no means involved in its union with the State. The Church fully understands Christ's words, "My kingdom is "not of this world," and readily assents to them, whether she leans upon the State or stands alone. All this will appear more fully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH STANDING ALONE.

THE Church can stand alone. Its origin is Divine. Its authority is from above. Its strength is in Christ. It is Christ's Church—not man's. It is not of this world. And though, as I have already said, we find not any precise and exact directions respecting its framework in the New Testament, yet we find in our own Church everything that is agreeable to that Divine Word; there is a response to every note struck; all is harmony.

We have our threefold orders of bishops, priests, and deacons; the bishops to rule the Church of God; the priests to minister; the deacons to serve, and win for themselves a good degree. Our bishops themselves are Presbyters; even as St. Peter, albeit an Apostle, calls himself a Presbyter; only they are invested with higher authority than other Presbyters, and are charged with peculiar functions. The *name* we set no store by, when examining the whole question by the light of Scripture. The

name is a mere matter of convenience ; whereas, the authority conferred and the functions exercised, are important and fundamental. A presbyter is a bishop, in a general sense, when he presides over a congregation of Christian men ; and he is a bishop in a peculiar sense (that is, in our present sense) when he presides over other presbyters. That such presidency, combined with authority and permanency, was conferred on Timothy and Titus in the early Church, there can be no doubt, for the Epistles written to them by St. Paul are conclusive on the point. But that the distinctive name or title did not immediately or necessarily follow, we are quite ready to admit.

At first, the Apostles alone bore rule and guided the Church at the express command of their Lord. But their office in its peculiarities, could not be, and was never intended to be permanent.

It could not be permanent : because, apart from the power of discerning spirits and working miracles, one essential part of the office consisted in being a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and of his resurrection. This was deemed essential at the nomination of a successor to the traitor Judas Iscariot : and it seems to have been a chief reason for our risen

Lord's revelation of himself to St. Paul:—"Have I "not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" he says, when enumerating the signs of his Apostleship. But this essential qualification could not be continued in succeeding generations, unless the heavens were to be opened at each election!

Neither was the office intended to be permanent. Our Lord's own words lead to this conclusion. He himself, speaking to his Apostles, says, "I have "chosen you and ordained you, that ye should "go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit "should remain" (John xv. 16). Observe, "your "fruit," not you; your converts, not your office; the Church, not the Apostleship. This was evidently understood; or else why were no steps taken to supply death vacancies? James, the brother of John, is killed with the sword:—no one is appointed to fill his place. St. Peter is about to put off his "tabernacle":—he takes care and thought that after his decease his converts should have the truths he had taught them ever in remembrance (that is, that his "fruit should remain"); but he says not a word about transferring to the shoulders of another the apostolic mantle which was falling from his own. St. Paul was "ready to be offered":—

but he contemplates no other "Apostle of the Gentiles." St. John, the survivor of all, took no measures to fill up the gaps which death had made. He was the last of the Apostles; and surely if any one was authorized to perpetuate the office in the Church, it was he! But he did no such thing; nay, he did rather the contrary; and it is very curious to trace this out. St. Paul in an Epistle to the Ephesians had spoken on this wise:— Referring to Christ's exaltation and care of the Church, he says, "He gave some, *Apostles*; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," and so on (Ephes. iv. 11). In this passage, and what follows, we have a simple statement of facts, and an account of what Christ had done for the edification of his people: and the correct inference is drawn, when we say that the Christian ministry is of Divine appointment, that it consists of divers orders, and that its object is, not self-exaltation or self-aggrandisement, but the edifying of believers, and carrying them on from childhood with its tossings to and fro by every wind of doctrine, to the stature, the matu-

rity, and the firmness of a Christ-like man. But some Ephesians of that day seem to have read the text wrong, after the writer had passed away. "See," we may imagine them saying, 'He gave "some, Apostles : ' thus it was written, and thus "it ought still to be. This office ought to be perpetuated. We need such infallible guides. Only "one remains, and he is a prisoner in the isle called "Patmos. The Church is already getting wrong. "Evils are creeping in. We must have Apostles "back again. In this Scripture we find our war-rant." And then, no doubt, one and another felt moved to take upon themselves the office, and to satisfy that craving for infallibility from which Popery, Irvingism, and Mormonism have since cropped up, and they called themselves "Apostles," and claimed authority, and assumed an office to which they had no right.

Now how does this last appear? Why, in process of time the matter came under the cognizance of that very St. John whose counsels they seem to have depreciated or ignored. He addressed a letter to them :—to this very self-same Church of Ephesus, a section of which stood complete in its own eyes after having thus taken the matter into its own hands: and

this is one part of the commendation addressed to the general body, that they had tried those "who called themselves Apostles, and were not, and had found them liars!" Truly there is nothing new under the sun! Men still call themselves "Apostles!" Still they "are not." Still they "are found liars." Texts are still perverted, and made to mean what they do not. Error still reproduces error.

The truth appears to be that the Apostles, and especially St. Paul, knowing well that their office was personal, and that its perpetuation was neither possible in itself, nor contemplated by their Divine Master, set themselves, before they were taken away, to provide means for the increase and government of the Church without it. Divinely guided, they took heed that after their decease the power to select and send men into the vineyard, to exercise godly discipline, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all authority, to banish erroneous and strange opinions, and to preserve sound doctrine, should remain in the Church when Inspiration, and the discerning of spirits, and the working of miracles, and the personal knowledge of Christ was withdrawn. And hence the selection from the ranks of those who were then and at that time called indis-

criminally and interchangeably PRESBYTERS or elders and BISHOPS or overseers, of individuals to whom this power might be delegated, and from whom it might descend in perpetual succession. These men, thus selected, were to be, not Apostles, with plenary powers; but successors of the Apostles, with limited powers.

Thus there arose easily and naturally a permanent Presbyter over the general body of presbyters in a church; or a permanent Bishop over the general body of bishops in a church—whichever term be chosen: the only attendant inconvenience of which arrangement would arise from the confusion of name. The name, evidently, would remain the same, whilst the authority would be different. This inconvenience soon would be, and soon was remedied, by confining the name or title of BISHOP to the superior, and the name or title of PRESBYTER to the inferior.

Deacons there always were, with a permanent office, but slightly varying functions; and hence arose our threefold distinctive office-bearers in the Church.

The other names or titles with which we are familiar, such as Archbishop, or Archdeacon, Dean

or Canon, are merely ecclesiastical or accidental, as marking the duties those eminent functionaries are called to exercise. These designations affect not in any way the general argument, which would remain the same if they were unknown or were to become obsolete.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH.

IN proving the harmony which exists between the Bible and the Church, which, as described in the last chapter, claims to be apostolical, and therefore in her origin, divine, it must ever be borne in mind, as already mentioned, that the Church did not assume her present form at once. Her development was gradual; and this seems to have been one amongst the many things which after our Lord's departure were to be taught the Apostles by the Holy Ghost, according to his most true promise. Hence if a man now takes the New Testament into his hands, and sits down to frame from it a scheme of what he thinks A CHURCH should be; or attempts to test by it the usages and framework of the existing Church, he very soon finds himself confused. The Acts of the Apostles, the various Epistles, and the Revelation of St. John form the chief materials for his examination and research. He finds a passage here, and another there, bearing upon the subject

he has in hand, sometimes directly, and sometimes indirectly. All these he selects and collates, and from them would frame his own scheme of Church government, or criticise that of his neighbours.

But his conclusion is not satisfactory. He cannot reconcile each separate passage. They will not dovetail into one another. They do not fit. Instead of uniformity, he finds contrariety. His doubts are not removed, neither is his mind clear, nor the result conclusive. The cause of it is this. He has been dealing with the New Testament as if it was one book, and written at one time; whereas it contains many books, which were written at many different times. He thus leaves out two most important elements for arriving at a right conclusion, viz.: THE DATES OF THE DIFFERENT BOOKS, and THE GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH.

For instance, he finds it recorded in the Acts of the Apostles that the early Christians esteemed nothing that they had their own—that they “were together and had all things common”—that they “sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need”:—and that this community of goods, of which we have an illustration shewing both its use and abuse in the

case of Ananias and Sapphira, met at the time with the sanction and approval of the Apostles.

"Here, then," the enquirer says, "is a model Church. Here is a specimen of what Christians ought to be, and what they ought to do. This is the example to be followed. This is primitive. This is apostolical. We of the present day are wrong, and must retrace our steps."

But soon after, examining further, he finds, in an Epistle addressed to the Corinthians, each individual Christian commanded to lay up in store, not in a common stock, but by himself on the first day of the week, as God had prospered him, that so there might be no gatherings when the Apostle came.

"Now how is this?" the enquirer might well ask. "The community of goods referred to before, is not to be found here; but exactly the reverse. Each man is held accountable for the gathering and dispensing of his own goods. There is confusion, and something like contradiction."

And so indeed there would be, and is, if DATES AND DEVELOPMENT are forgotten. But there is no contradiction and no confusion at all, if they are remembered, and it is found that there was an interval of twenty-three years (A.D. 33—A.D. 56)

between the practice approved of in the Acts of the Apostles, and the directions subsequently given by St. Paul in his Epistle.

Christians were at the beginning a proscribed race. They were few in number, and lived in fear. They were cut off, as by a sudden stroke, not only from their domestic relationships, but from their daily and lawful avocations. Drawn together by curiosity at the miracle wrought on the day of Pentecost, and savingly impressed by the power of the Holy Ghost upon the word spoken by St. Peter; believing what at the dawn of day they had disbelieved; valuing what one short hour before they had despised; they found themselves suddenly not only "new creatures in Christ," but men living in a new world. They were Christians before the very scaffolding of the Christian Church was reared. They were worshippers before the house of God was built. They were suppliants before there was a place for prayer. Hence a common fund; hence mutual edification; hence the assembling in an upper chamber; hence the breaking of bread from house to house. It was all for the present necessity: and though it may look very sweet and loving, yet there was no permanency in it. It was

permitted, but not commanded; and after a lapse of time, as we have seen, by apostolical authority it passed away. The Church gathered and sheltered her children; and all was thenceforward done decently and in order.

So with regard to the exercise of miraculous and spiritual gifts in the Church of Corinth. Christian men there prophesied and spoke in unknown tongues; they pressed forward each one with a psalm, with a doctrine, with an interpretation; sometimes two spoke, sometimes three; and all these spiritual exercises, tending to confusion, were regulated, but not forbidden by the Apostle in his first Epistle.

“Here then again,” men say, “we have something primitive and apostolic. These gifts of the Spirit are our heritage. Things will never come right till these signs of a true Church are found—till in the same way the Spirit is poured out upon us, and we also prophesy and speak with tongues and interpret.” Straightway the thought is father to the deed, and their Community is framed upon this anticipation, if not upon this reality.

But they forget that all this was but the out-

burst of young fresh Christianity in the Corinthian Church ; the unchecked, and at first unregulated action of new converts. These Christians were but three years old when St. Paul first wrote to them. Rich in gifts, but children in understanding, they had no experience to check the first impulse of a new affection.

It does not need, in the present case, that we go far on in dates and development, and shew how in later Epistles none of these things were enjoined upon the Churches. One year suffices for our argument. In St. Paul's second Epistle, written one year later than the first, there is not a word upon the subject. The effervescence had subsided ; the unknown and unedifying tongues had ceased ; interpreters were no longer required ; women were silent in the churches ; all had subsided into the work of faith and labour of love and patience of hope ; and the great topics of true repentance, the restoration of the penitent, the earthly and the heavenly house, charitable offerings, apostolical authority, labours and visions, constituted the main topics of the Apostle's address. If in one Epistle we learn the state of the Church at one period, in the other we learn the state into which it had

progressed at a subsequent period. A very short date in this case suffices, or should suffice, to prevent our mistaking a *phase* of the Church for a full development. Diversities of tongues were never bestowed as an end, but as a means to an end :—a sign to those that believed not, and a means of rapidly diffusing the Gospel far and wide.

So again. If the Epistle to the Galatians is carefully read, scarcely an allusion will be found to the ministerial function; neither is there any salutation to any responsible minister. The “Churches” are addressed as bodies of Christian men or congregationalists; the “teachers” and the “taught” are spoken of as communicating with and mutually edifying one another; brethren overtaken in a fault are to be restored by the more spiritual amongst them. But there is not a word distinctly recognizing ministerial authority or Church organization.

From the perusal, then, of this Epistle by itself alone, any one might be ready to infer that a body of Christians once gathered together, were competent to edify one another, and to serve God acceptably without needing either Bishops, Priests, or Deacons.

And yet in the Epistle to the Hebrews, written

by the same pen which wrote the Epistle to the Galatians, you read these words, "Obey them that
 "have the rule over you, and submit yourselves,
 "for they *watch for your souls*, as they that must
 "give account." (Heb. xiii. 17.) And in the
 Epistle of St. Peter, written to these very Galatians amongst others, you have these words, "The
 "elders which are among you I exhort, who am also
 "an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ,
 "and also a partaker of the glory which shall be
 "revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among
 "you; *taking the oversight thereof* not by constraint,
 "but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready
 "mind" (1 Pet. v. 2). Now here again there is
 an apparent contradiction ; and the man (or the
 woman) who, gathering together a few like-minded,
 has framed his Church as he considers upon the
 Galatian model, will find at once that he has acted
 hastily and wrongly. For it must be obvious to
 him and any one, that if Christians desirous of
 edifying one another are to be exempt from all
 spiritual rule and governance, they cannot at the
 same time obey those that have the rule over them
 and watch for their souls ; and that, if their teacher
 is to be one of themselves, he cannot have the

“oversight” of them. All this therefore involves an apparent contradiction, if DATES AND DEVELOPMENT are forgotten; but there is no contradiction at all if they are borne in mind, and it is remembered that between the Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to the Hebrews there was an interval of eleven years (A.D. 52 to A.D. 63), and between the Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle of St. Peter an interval of nine years (A.D. 52 to A.D. 61),—ample time for what in reality took place, the establishment of Church order and the appointment of ordained and settled ministers.*

* Let it be observed here and in all other cases, that the dates are taken from early and independent authorities in the Church. I have not adapted the dates to the argument, but have drawn the argument from the dates. Whatever slight variations there may be, they are of no moment. I am of course familiar with the recent able work of Dr. Lightfoot on the Galatians, and am aware therefore that he assigns a later date (A.D. 57) to that Epistle. With all due deference, however, I venture to differ from his conclusion, and to abide by the opinion of almost all the earlier commentators, that it was written about the year 52 or 53. The parallel passages from the Epistle to the Romans quoted to shew that both the Epistles were written about the same time, are admirable proofs of the identity of the author of the two Epistles, but not necessarily of their dates. When the Epistle to the Romans was written, the Epistle to the Galatians might well have been in St. Paul's mind,

So again, if you read St. Paul's address to the elders of the Church of Ephesus assembled at Miletus, you will perceive that however numerous they might have been, there is no distinction made amongst them. No one in particular is addressed; no pre-eminence is assigned to any one individual; but, as was before hinted, they are all alike called, in one place Presbyters or elders (Acts. xx. 17), and in another Bishops or overseers (Acts xx. 28).

and the very parchment probably before his eyes; but there is nothing to prove that four or five years (and the discrepancy is no more) might not have elapsed between the writing of the two.

The expression (Gal. iv. 15,) "Where is then the blessedness ye spake of," etc., evidently refers to their first hearty reception of the truth at St. Paul's first visit in the year 51; and the expression (Gal. i. 6), "I marvel that ye are *so soon* removed from him that called you," etc., evidently refers, I think, to a period of months rather than of years. One or two years at all events, satisfies the expression better, to my mind, than Dr. Lightfoot's six or seven years. Neither can I think that the expression (Gal. iv. 13) *το πρῶτον*, which our translators render "at the first," and Dr. Lightfoot "before," has any reference to the second visit; but rather to the first. And finally the expression (Gal. iv. 16) "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (*αληθεύων υμῖν*) rather seems to point, not to a second visit, but to this present truth-telling Epistle. On the whole, then, since the question is only on the surface after all, I prefer to think as others have thought, that the Epistle to the Galatians was written after St. Paul's first visit from Corinth, and about the year 52, as in the text.

And yet in the Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, whom, but a short time before writing it, he had left behind at this very self-same city of Ephesus, he is charged exclusively and personally with the duties of superintendence, jurisdiction, exhortation, excommunication, and ordination. The presbyters in general are amenable to him. They are liable to be cited before him; they are to be ordained by him; he is to watch over the purity of the faith, and in all things to exercise godly discipline.

Here, again, therefore, is an apparent contradiction, if DATES AND DEVELOPMENT are forgotten. For in the one case there seems to be a perfect equality amongst the ministers of the Gospel, and in the other a very important diversity.

But all is cleared up in a moment if we remember that about eight years had elapsed between St. Paul's address at Miletus, and his first Epistle to Timothy (A.D. 58 . . . A.D. 66),—ample time to prove the need of Episcopal superintendence, and to supply it. Timothy was appointed, because experience had proved, and St. Paul perceived, that Timothy was wanted.

Other instances might be cited to the same effect. But the gradual development and settlement of this

same Church at Ephesus, when well considered, will abundantly suffice to prove all that is required.

You will observe, then, that about A.D. 53, St. Paul for the first time visited Ephesus (Acts xviii. 19). His visit was then very short: but he returned the following year (Acts xix. 1), and found there certain disciples who doubtless had heard John the Baptist preach in the wilderness of Judea, and had received both his doctrine and his baptism. For some unknown reason, connected most probably with their secular avocations, they had soon after left Judea and settled at Ephesus. There St. Paul found them; and having been instructed by him more perfectly, they received Christian baptism. This was followed by the laying on of hands, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the speaking with tongues, and prophesying. Thus twelve ordained and fully qualified missionaries were ready to the Apostles' hand:—ready to “tell it out among the heathen “that the Lord is King.” And knowing this, we wonder the less at the great success which attended the Apostles' labours, and at the large number of Elders assembled so soon after at Miletus. Here were twelve at once.

For two years and three months St. Paul re-

mained at Ephesus on this occasion (Timothy being one of those who ministered to him) ; so that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the "Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." This brings us to A.D. 57. About a year after, as St. Paul was hastening to Jerusalem, he sent for the Elders of the Church to meet him at Miletus, as we have already mentioned. No further intercourse of any kind is recorded till the celebrated Epistle to the Ephesians was written, in or about the year 62 or 63, during St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. The salutation of that Epistle is addressed to the saints (*τοῖς ἀγίοις*) and the faithful (*πιστοῖς*) ; the first term apparently indicating the lay members of the Church, and the second the faithful soldiers, servants, stewards, or ambassadors of Christ. From this salutation it appears that the same equality of Church office-bearers obtained, as at the beginning. But that some change had become desirable, we find so far back as the time of the address at Miletus. Even then St. Paul spoke of "grievous wolves" entering in, and "not sparing "the flock;" and of men arising from among themselves, "speaking perverse things, to draw away "disciples after them." So injurious was the

equality of ministers, and so necessary the introduction of effective discipline and ecclesiastical authority ! And now in this Epistle there are hints about a gradation of ministers being desirable ; and a diversity amongst them, according to the original ordering of the Lord, is spoken of as being more conducive to the edification of believers, than an equality. The Apostle compares the Church to the human body, which consists of various members, united by joints and bands ; each part having its special place and special use and proper proportion ; the whole being compacted together, and the blood circulating through it and conveying nourishment to the head and the heart ; making thus “ increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love.” This passage, taken in connection with the context, and in its application to the “ work of the ministry,” there spoken of, seems introductory to what was already in the Apostle’s mind, and was soon to be carried into effect, viz. : an alteration in the external framework of the Church, the introduction of a kind of primary and secondary authority amongst its ministers, and, in anticipation of his own decease, the placing over the whole body One vested with authority and chosen by himself—the Presbyter

over presbyters, or the Bishop over bishops, of whom we have already spoken.

A few years later (probably A.D. 66) this was done. Timothy, first Bishop of Ephesus, was then visiting his diocese; and St. Paul wrote an Epistle to him containing exactly such directions as would be required by one entering upon a *new* but most important office; the main scope being to shew him how he ought to behave himself in the discharge of his new office in the Church of God. His authority is defined; his duties are assigned; the peculiarities of his work are laid down; he is to be the ordainer of faithful, the rejecter of unfaithful men.

This was followed by an Epistle to Titus, which goes to prove that the appointment of Timothy was not a singular one; and by a second Epistle to Timothy, which goes to prove that it was not a temporary one. Timothy's residence at Ephesus was not continuous, because St. Paul yearned often after the company and sympathy of his "own son in the faith," and often called him to his side; but the directions and cautions given to him were of perpetual obligation, not only upon himself, but upon all successive and similar office-bearers in the Church.

Soon after writing this second Epistle with his

dying hand, St. Paul disappears from the scene, whilst Timothy remains. The chariot of fire has borne Elijah to heaven—his mantle falls upon Elisha. The Apostleship has ended—Episcopacy begins. There is thenceforth at Ephesus one Church Representative, entrusted with authority, and clothed with responsibility.

To Him, in the year 95 or 96, thirty years after these events took place, and when these changes had become familiar, there comes a letter from THE LORD, written by the hand of His servant John, a prisoner in the isle called Patmos. It is addressed, not now to the “saints” or to the “faithful” (those things have passed away), but to the ANGEL of the Church; not to the many, but to the One; the One, superior, responsible, presiding, and charged specially with the angelic “ministry of reconciliation.” We know not certainly whether this individual was Timothy—whether he survived and still held the office which had been entrusted to him. But if, as is most probable, and as Ecclesiastical history asserts, he had followed St. Paul to glory, it was certainly one of his successors in the diocese of Ephesus, who was sitting in his seat and discharging his duties. For the letter, though short, still re-

fers to the exercise of Episcopal jurisdiction—the repression of the Nicolaitan heretics, and the trial of false pretenders.

And thus by observing dates and development, a clue is obtained to the gradual settlement of the whole Church: and that from an examination of Holy Scripture alone. I have not touched, nor am I about to touch, upon the testimony of the early Fathers, though that testimony clenches the nail in this “sure place”; because I know that there are many in the present day who prefer to listen to the Word written, and will bow to no less authority. I do not blame them. But even such must perceive that by searching the Scriptures we are led, step by step, up to an Episcopal platform of Church Government—the same, in its chief outlines, as exists amongst us at the present day; and consequently, that it is not on light grounds we claim for it an inspired origin, and say that England’s Church is in harmony with England’s Bible.

CHAPTER V.

LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT.

No one, I presume, would say, that notwithstanding the force of the argument concluded in the last chapter, they are at liberty to select any one epoch of the Gospel history, and to frame a Church from the unfinished, and consequently imperfect model which existed at such epoch. No. It is clear that we must move on with the Apostles, and go as far as they went. If they altered and improved upon certain usages which for a time prevailed—if they pruned a tree which grew too luxuriantly—if they ordained and appointed settled ministers over each Church as the necessity appeared—if they delegated a large portion of their authority to individual successors now called Bishops, preparatory to their own decease, they had good reasons in each and every case for what they did, and acted as they were “moved by the HOLY GHOST.” As wise master builders they gradually reared the ecclesiastical structure we have been contemplating; and we must

copy, not the unfinished, but the finished model. This seems to be required even by Common Sense ; and it little matters to us what diversities may be proved from Scripture to have existed in the constitution of the first framed Churches, if as time rolled on, all these diversities merged, under apostolical guidance, into one general rule of decency and order. That rule, as finally developed, we are bound to follow ; for to copy an unfinished model is to frame an imperfect Church.

But, be it observed on the other hand most carefully, that whilst we must be ready to go as far as the Apostles went, we must also be ready to stop where they stopped. The theory of development must rest on the basis of INSPIRATION. Where inspiration ceases, authority, as binding upon the conscience in primary matters affecting salvation, ceases also : though everything connected with secondary matters, such as the details of rites and ceremonies in each Church, may be regulated by a principle of general consent, such as finds expression in synods, convocations, or councils. There are some who would carry on the theory of development till it embraces all the accumulating corruption of successive ages ; and would then bind this upon the con-

science as if it were all alike God's truth! They would not stop as to the matter of absolute authority where the Apostles stop, but, claiming equal authority and insinuating that they left their work imperfect, would carry it on themselves unto perfection. Comparing Christianity in its saving doctrines, to a grand river springing from some far-off source and gradually deepening and widening in its mighty flow as it stretches onwards to its ocean bed, they would have us deem the waters at its mouth—necessarily turbid and defiled with earthy mixtures and traditionary streams—to be as good, as sweet, as pure, as healthful, and as life-giving, as if we sat and drank them under the cool shade at the fountain side. But this will never do. This we utterly repudiate. For the development of all saving truth we must have unerring authority.

And in truth, the necessity for this is felt by others than ourselves. And hence, as we have seen, the dogma of Infallibility, to enable the Church of Rome to stamp truth and unchangeableness on all her unscriptural errors. Infallibility was not dreamt of in Rome's earlier and better days. As combined with Universality, it was even denounced by Pope Gregory in his day as a mark of Antichrist. But

when the emergency called, it sprang forth fully armed. Apostolical Authority thus transformed and transferred, and called Church Infallibility, may avail for anything; and every error may be developed from some one saving and necessary truth.

Thus reverence for departed saints and a tender recollection of the sufferings and triumphs of the early martyrs easily developed itself into the "Invocation of Saints" as a doctrine of the Church. Thus the sweet and gentle character of the mother of our Lord is developed into the "Immaculate Conception," which seems to have filled up the cup of Rome's idolatries. Thus the Holy Communion of our Lord's most blessed body and blood is developed into Transubstantiation, and the adoration of the Host. Thus "the power to bind and to loose," swells to the granting of "Indulgences":—and their sale to requiring "fruits meet for repentance." Thus the Christian duty of merely confessing "faults one to another," leads to the Confessional, with all its abominations and its mental slavery. Thus unerring certainty is assigned to all the decisions of St. Peter's successors, because the Lord said to him, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Thus the temporal dominion

is upheld, because an Apostle asked, "Who feedeth
 "a flock, and eateth not of the milk?" So that
 after all, on this principle, the Cardinal was not so
 far wrong, who, wishing to justify the Pope's claim
 to punish heretics and confiscate their goods, took
 for his text, the words, "Rise, Peter; kill and
 "eat."

But as I before said, This will never do. These
 are all cunningly devised fables, and broken cis-
 terns. Of this muddy water, our English Church,
 so soon as she was free, refused to drink. She went
 up at once to the fountain head of Truth, where
 there was no earthly mixtures of infallibility or
 purgatory, or idol worship, or transubstantiation, or
 invocation of saints, or the confessional, or tradition
 as the joint rule of faith:—and we must go with her.
 We may learn much from the records of past ages,
 and we may, and do recognise the decision of early
 Councils on disputed points of doctrine, as embodied
 and preserved in our Creeds: but that teaching and
 authority alone we hold to be binding on the con-
 science, and necessary to everlasting salvation, which
 may be found in, or proved by, the writings of in-
 spired men in Holy Scripture.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

HERE then the argument closes ; for here we find firm footing, and feel safe. On either side there is danger—danger, in these our days, from semi-Romanism and from semi-Scepticism. The one overlays the Bible, the other undermines it. We must be upon our guard against both. It is not the duty of every one to put out the hand and steady the shaking ark, but it is the duty of every one to consider himself, lest he also be tempted, and lest, thinking that he stands, he falls. Especially is it the duty of the young to avoid tampering with error, and indulging mere idle curiosity. The tasting of forbidden fruit, reading of unwholesome literature, fording the rapid current of the day, rarely escapes unpunished. We are drawn gradually on and on, get into deep water, and lose our footing before we are aware. Better serve God with a quiet mind in the gospel of his Son, and in the good old ways of the Church ! In that ark we are

safe. We have a Church built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ; a Church whose glory it is to point to the Lamb of God, to appeal fearlessly to the written Word, to make no pretensions she cannot support, to lead the devotions of her sons in words of truth and soberness, to uphold the great doctrines of justification and sanctification by the Son and Spirit of God, to reverence and rightly administer the Holy Sacraments, to guide through life, console in death, and thus, through the grace of her divine and risen Lord, to bring many sons to glory.

This Church stands like a Beacon reared with great skill and at great cost, in a stormy sea. Men looking at her when winds are hushed, and ocean's waves are calm, wonder at the care bestowed on what they deem of little worth ; and some, in their thoughtless love of change, or fickleness of mind, or self-conceit, or enmity, would remove the fabric and quench the light. But let the hour of darkness come, let the sea arise in the greatness of its strength, let winds and waves be howling for their prey ; and oh ! how many a soul "ready to perish," will bless that light shining so brightly over

life's tempestuous sea, and guiding so safely to the desired haven. Yes; we of the Church have enemies on every side, but Christ is our Light and our salvation; whom then shall we fear? The Lord is the strength of our life; of whom then shall we be afraid?

Let us remain firm in our principles of attachment to the Church, recognising her usefulness, availing ourselves of her instructions, and submitting to her authority. But let us never put her for a moment in the place of CHRIST; never regard her but as a great means to a great end; a structure reared to guide lost sinners to the Saviour. Let this be the bond of our attachment to the Church, as it is the secret of her own stability.

THE END.

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